

Remarks:

In the Final Office Action dated November 07, 2003, the Examiner rejected claims 1-3, 5, 8-10, 12, 15-17, 19, 22-24, 26, 29, 30, 32, 34, 35, 37, 39, 40, 42, 44, 45 and 47 and objected to claims 4, 6, 7, 11, 13, 14, 18, 20, 21, 25, 27, 28, 31, 33, 36, 38, 41, 43, 46 and 48 as being dependent upon a rejected base claim. The Examiner indicated that the objected to claims would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

The Examiner's objection to claims 4, 6, 7, 11, 13, 14, 18, 20, 21, 25, 27, 28, 31, 33, 36, 38, 41, 43, 46 and 48 has been obviated by the present amendment in that such claims have been rewritten in independent form to include all the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Furthermore, such claims have been amended to reduce the number of digits in the values recited in the claims. Should the Examiner have any questions regarding the changes to the values recited in the claims, Applicants' attorney would appreciate a telephonic interview to change the values to the previously amended state. Thus, it is respectfully submitted that such claims are proper, in condition for allowance, and should be entered by the Examiner.

The Applicants do not acquiesce to the rejection of claims 1, 8, 15, 22, 29, 34, 39 and 44 under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) or claims 2, 3, 5, 9, 10, 12, 16, 17, 19, 23, 24, 26, 30, 32, 35, 37, 40, 42, 45 and 47 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a). However, the Applicants have cancelled claims 2-4, 6-7, 9-11, 13-14, 16-18, 20-21, 23-25, 27-28, 30-31, 33, 35-36, 38, 40-41, 43, 45-46 and 48 to expedite the issuance of a patent on the claims indicated allowable by the Examiner.

This is intended to be a complete response to the Final Office Action dated November 07, 2003. Should the Examiner have any question concerning the amendment or remarks set forth herein, the Applicants' attorney would welcome the opportunity to discuss such matters with the Examiner.

Respectfully submitted,

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